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ABSTRACT

This report describes activities and accomplishments of the 3-year project, "Expanding the Circle of Services for Children and Youth Who Are Deaf Blind," a South Dakota project to improve services to this population through improved interagency cooperation and technical assistance. A highlight of the third year was the formation of the Great Plains Regional Alliance which addresses the needs of children who are deaf blind and their families who reside on American Indian reservation lands. The project resulted in improved identification of children who are deaf blind, provision of training and technical assistance on inclusion strategies for almost 4,000 individuals, and provision of training concerning deaf blind children for 573 individuals. Development of several publications and a video in collaboration with other agencies and programs is also noted. Specific activities and their status at the project's completion are listed for several objectives within the project's two major goals, which focused on: (1) early identification and intervention; and (2) service provision in integrated educational settings and successful transition to adult settings. (DB)

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ED 391 332

Date: December 31, 1995

Final Report: South Dakota Deaf Blind Project
Expanding the Circle of Services for Children & Youth
Who are Deaf Blind

Project # H025A20001

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Expanding the Circle of Services for Children Who Are Deaf Blind

South Dakota Deaf Blind Project

FINAL REPORT

Year III of the Expanding the Circle has been a very productive and successful one. The highlight of the year was the formation of the Great Plains Regional Alliance. The Alliance is made up of the states of Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Montana and Wyoming. These are the states that encompass the majority of the Great Plains Tribes and have extensive regions designated as reservation lands. These states have agreed that a collaborative effort is needed to address the needs of children who are deaf blind and their families who reside on reservation lands. Many of the reservations cross state boundaries and many families travel between the reservation areas.

With this recognition of need, South Dakota agreed to take a leadership role and submit a "pilot project" application for the next funding cycle. The application included goals and objectives that would meet the needs of families and children in the six state region. The states are committed to developing strategies and resources to meet the needs of this target population. If this can be done through a pilot project or if necessary through existing funded project, all states agreed it was absolutely necessary. The "pilot project" was approved and it will be exciting to continue to address this high need area in such a collaborative effort. The Great Plains states have long worked successfully together on common issues and this relationship will provide a framework to create and implement new ideas. The American Indian has historically been a VERY under-represented group within the realm of deaf-blindness and it is gratifying to finally address it as a high priority.

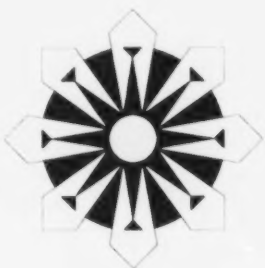
Here in South Dakota, the strategies for identifying children who are deaf blind on the reservation have been fairly successful. The 1994 census listed 48 children, with 8 children newly identified through the Three Rivers Interagency Network, which serves the Rosebud Reservation. Success within the Pine Ridge Reservation has been harder to grasp, but efforts continue and information is readily provided and received. It has yet to yield any new children in the identification process.

Several cooperative efforts yielded new and exciting opportunities. The South Dakota Statewide Systems Change Project and the South Dakota Deaf Blind Project collaborated on training and technical assistance activities during the year. The projects were able to provide 3,995 individuals information on strategies that would lead to successful inclusion of children with severe disabilities, including those who are deaf blind. 573 individuals received specific information and training on children who are deaf blind.

Several products were developed throughout the year that will provide strategies, information and ideas to educators, families and service providers. **"Welcoming Parents as Partners", The Systems Change Primer: A Closer Look At Inclusion", and "Welcoming All Children: A Closer Look at Inclusive Child Care"** were developed cooperatively with the Systems Change Project and disseminated state wide.

A collaborative effort with Indiana provided an opportunity to add a new video to our library. **Functional Vision: Learning to SEE** will soon be available for distribution. Using footage shot previously, this video will join the existing video: Function Vision: Learning to LOOK, and the Helping Your Child Learn series developed in years past.

It has been a privilege to have the opportunity to collaborate with these other 307.11 projects. The collaboration has allowed South Dakota to utilize the expertise of many, many others and maximized the dollars funded to meet the needs of children who are deaf blind and their families. The number of individuals provided information, training and technical assistance has been increased and through the availability of additional expertise, the quality of these has also improved. Our heartfelt thanks to all who have participated in these collaborative efforts and we look forward to continuing to work toward meeting the needs of children who are deaf blind and their families.



EXPANDING THE CIRCLE OF SERVICES AND SUPPORTS
for
CHILDREN & YOUTH WITH DEAF BLINDNESS

GOAL 1: ***Children with deaf blindness and their families will have enhanced skills and abilities through a high quality, responsive, statewide system of early identification and intervention.***

OBJECTIVE 1.1: Given appropriate training and supports, children birth to 21 years of age with deaf-blindness will be identified through the Local Interagency Network system in South Dakota.
ACTIVITY 1.1.1: Provide support, technical assistance and training to identified model sites (3), to ensure ongoing identification and services to children with deaf blindness and their families.
Timeline: Ongoing.
Final: During the 3rd and final year of the Expanding the Circle Project **523** individuals received training or information on children with deaf-blindness. Information was mailed to all Single Points of Contact for the Local Interagencies as well as presented at many of the Interagency meetings. Local Interagency meetings attended were: Three Rivers, Central Dakota, Yamni, Mid-Central, Aberdeen, Dupree, and the annual conference of Single Points of Contact and Regional Interagency Facilitators.

Activity 1.1.2: Identify one additional site serving predominantly American Indian families to replicate strategies implemented and found successful in original sites.
Timeline: New site selected by December 1, 1994
Final: The project continued to support the sites of Rosebud and Pine Ridge and initiated contact on the Cheyenne River Reservation through the Dupree Interagency. Rosebud continues to be the site making successful progress although Yamni is beginning to make some positive strides in consistent identification of children with disabilities. The Yamni network has had difficulty in maintaining consistent membership in the network which has hampered efforts to develop any type of a system. Efforts will continue in all of these sites.

Activity 1.1.3: In collaboration with the Office of Special Education, Part H Coordinator, provide training and technical assistance to local interagency network personnel. Training will include: awareness, early identification, inclusion, team building and family support issues.
Timeline: Ongoing.
Final: Working through the Local Interagency Networks, project personnel provided information and technical assistance to 208 individuals. In addition, information regarding children with deaf blindness and the resources available through the project was mailed to all interagencies, school districts and service agencies in South Dakota.

Activity 1.1.4: In collaboration with TRACES, bring together states within the region for a symposium to discuss issues of identifying and providing services to children and families residing on reservation land.
Timeline: October, 1994 and one follow-up, April, 1995.
Final: This has quite possibly been the most successful activity the past year. In August, 1994 a meeting was held in Minneapolis to discuss the issue of identifying children who are deaf blind and reside on reservation land. The states of South Dakota, North Dakota, Minnesota, Nebraska, Wyoming attended. Montana was included but was unable to attend this initial meeting. A follow up meeting was held at the Project Director's meeting in November 1994. All states agreed that further collaboration was needed between the states to address this issue. South Dakota agreed to take a leadership role in the development of a Pilot Project application for these states. The states subsequently have come together under that Pilot application as the Great Plains Regional Alliance. The application was submitted and much to our delight was approved. A meeting was scheduled for early September, 1995 but ran into some snags. The states met again during the Project Director's meeting in Washington, DC, November 1995.

Activity 1.1.5: Utilizing the Local Interagency Networks serving reservation families, identify specific child and family needs and develop an implementation plan.
Timeline: Initial contact to Networks - October 1994;
Final: Within the Three Rivers Interagency, which serves the Rosebud Reservation, the deaf blind project has been incorporated into their local plan of operation and is an integral part of each and every meeting. At the other sites of Pine Ridge and Cheyenne River work is continuing to focus on how best to proceed. Progress is slower in these two regions but is moving ahead.

Activity 1.1.6: Develop and disseminate a "replication" manual of successful strategies implemented in model sites.
Timeline: Final draft available 12-1-94
Final: In collaboration with the South Dakota Statewide Systems Change Project, several documents were developed and disseminated during this past year. **"Welcoming Parents as Partners", "The Systems Change Primer: A Closer Look at Inclusion", and "Welcoming All Children: A Closer Look at Inclusive Child Care"**. All of these booklets include strategies that are successful with children who are deaf blind. An actual "replication" booklet has not yet been developed due to the delays in finalizing successful strategies in Pine Ridge and Cheyenne River. Work will continue on gathering ideas, information and strategies that can be included in a replication guide.

Activity 1.1.7: Organize and disseminate an informational packet to service providers conducting early childhood screenings or providing early intervention services. Package would provide information on identification of children who might be deaf blind, types of services available, and intervention needs.
Timeline: Initial package available 12-1-94
Final: Information was provided to all Single Points of Contact at the Local Interagency Networks. All school districts, cooperatives, public and private agencies serving children with disabilities were provided with information relative to children who are deaf blind. In addition the project sponsored June Downing to do a presentation during the annual Special Education Conference, November 14-15, 1994. Throughout the year a total of 573 individuals receive some sort of training or technical assistance from project staff. This number does **NOT** include information mailed to individuals but is a count of face to face contacts.

Activity 1.1.8: Distribute, collect and summarize the deaf blind annual census for South Dakota.
Timeline: Annually.
Final: The annual census was completed as required and shows a count in South Dakota of 48 children identified as deaf blind.

OBJECTIVE 1.2 Given appropriate training and supports all children identified with deaf blindness and their families will receive appropriate intervention assistance from local education, health, medical and interagency network systems.

Activity 1.2.1: Coordinate activities with existing inservice and preservice opportunities to ensure that strategies reflect meeting the needs of children with deaf blindness and cultural competence in the area of American Indian families.
Timeline: Ongoing.
Final: In an effort to maximize efforts most training activities were completed in collaboration with the South Dakota Statewide Systems Change Project. The Systems Change project provided technical assistance, information and training to 3,995 individuals during the past year. This collaboration provides opportunities to reach a great number of people on the needs of children with disabilities including those who are deaf blind. This collaboration also led to the publication and dissemination of three booklets: "Welcoming All Children: A Closer Look at Inclusive Child Care" (a collaborative effort with the Dept. Of Human Services), "The Systems Change Primer: A Closer Look at Inclusion", and "Welcoming Parents as Partners". All of these booklets have been well received and remain in high demand throughout the state and the surrounding states.

Activity 1.2.2: Utilizing the data from the "Helping Your Child Learn" video survey, develop a plan to more effectively meet the needs of families.
Timeline: First draft 12-1-94.
Final: Based on the information from the survey, it was clear that parents liked using videos as an option for obtaining information and training. Based on that, using film footage from previous shoots, South Dakota collaborated with Indiana and North Dakota to produce another video entitled "Functional Vision: Learning to SEE". This will be in addition to the already produced "Functional Vision: Learning to LOOK" which has been available for nearly 2 years. The "Learning to SEE" video is not yet available for dissemination but should be soon. Each of the two videos comes with a small booklet that provides some ideas and strategies.

Activity 1.2.3: Coordinate resources and activities with the Lakota College, Technical Institutes and high education systems to enhance training programs to prepare professionals and paraprofessional to meet the needs of children with deaf blindness.
Timeline: Ongoing.
Final: For the first time project personnel were able to successfully collaborate with the Oglalla Lakota College to provide training to students at the preservice level. April 20, 1995 project staff traveled to Allen, South Dakota to work with a class of 12 students and on April 25, 1995 to Manderson to work with a small class of 5 students. Both were well received and we look forward to continuing to work with Oglalla Lakota College as well as Sinte Gleske.

GOAL 2: Identified children with deaf blindness will have increased opportunities to participate in appropriate, integrated educational settings and successfully transition from educational to adult living and work settings.

OBJECTIVE 2.1: Given the resources, training, and supports, all children, birth through 21 years of age, identified as deaf blind will be provided expanded opportunities for appropriate integration with typical peers and successful transition from educational to adult living and work settings.

Activity 2.1.1: Enhance existing systems within the LEA structure to increase opportunities for inclusion of families, community members, tribal leaders and service agencies in meeting the needs of children with deaf blindness in general education and community settings.

Timeline: Ongoing.

Final: In collaboration with the South Dakota Statewide Systems Change Project the project provided technical assistance, information and training to 3,995 individuals during the past year. Information and training covered such topics as: team building, creative problem solving, successful strategies for inclusion, time management, curriculum modification and adaptations, just to name a few. This collaboration provides opportunities to reach a great number of people on the needs of children with disabilities including those who are deaf blind. This collaboration also led to the publication and dissemination of three booklets: "Welcoming All Children: A Closer Look at Inclusive Child Care" (a collaborative effort with the Dept. Of Human Services), "The Systems Change Primer: A Closer Look at Inclusion", and "Welcoming Parents as Partners". All of these booklets have been well received and remain in high demand throughout the state and the surrounding states.

Activity 2.1.2: Develop strategies to assist educators, service providers and families in becoming effective team members to meet the needs of children with severe disabilities in general education and community settings.

Timeline: Ongoing.

Final: Team building continues to be the foundation of inclusion in all project presentations and product development. It is highlighted and presented at every opportunity when talking about inclusion. Through the collaborative effort with the South Dakota Statewide Systems Change project 3,995 individuals received face to face training or technical assistance during the past year. In addition, many, many more received information through products developed and disseminated by the two projects.

Activity 2.1.3: Coordinate activities with the South Dakota Transition Project to develop and implement transition strategies that reflect the needs of children with deaf blindness and their families.

Timeline: Ongoing.

Final: The South Dakota Transition Project has been somewhat in a state of suspended animation this past year. A new application was submitted and has been approved at the federal level but is on hold at the state level. However, the Education Strategists regularly contact existing Transition staff when necessary. A good working relationship exists with the Transition Project and activities will continue to include them when appropriate.

Activity: 2.1.4: Provide support and technical assistance necessary for movement of children with deaf blindness to less restrictive environments and increased opportunities for interaction with non-disabled peers.

Timeline: Ongoing.

Final: In 1990, children with severe disabilities including those who are deaf blind, were served in a variety of settings, most of them separate from non-disabled peers. Sioux Falls, the state's largest school district, operated two separate buildings within the district, to serve children with severe to moderate disabilities. Rapid City, the second largest school district also operated a separate facility for children with severe to moderate disabilities. Options for children with the most severe disabilities consisted of the state operated facilities, Custer State Hospital and Redfield Hospital. Another program mentioned in the original project, was the Platte Hospital Program. This program was based in a small rural nursing home and provided services to 4 children with severe disabilities from the Platte community. Now most of these programs are no longer in existence. The State Hospitals no longer admit children. Children with severe disabilities in Rapid City and Sioux Falls now receive services in neighborhood schools. The Platte program was closed and the children moved two blocks to the Platte Community School where all their peers go to school.

Activity 2.1.5: Evaluate training and technical assistance to determine effectiveness and priorities for future needs.

Timeline: Ongoing.

Final: All training activities were evaluated to determine effectiveness and make necessary changes in future training opportunities and product development. This is an ongoing effort and is accomplished in collaboration with the South Dakota Statewide Systems Change Project and the Office of Special Education.

South Dakota Statewide Systems Change Project
Contact Log

Date	Training Activity	Student	Admin	Reg Teach	SpEd Teach	Para Pro	Rel Ser	Comm Pers	High Educ	Parent	Other
10-27	BIA Funded SpEd Conf		1	2	2	1		1			
12-16	BIA Schools										9
4-20	Oglalla College - Allen	12							1		
4-25	Oglalla College - Manderson	5							1		
5-3	SPOC's & RIF's Sharing Conf										35
6-24	Current Trends Conf		2	45	5		2				
8-24	Midland Campus-Aberdeen Physical Therapists						6				
	Totals	**17**	**3**	**47**	**7**	**1**	**8**	**1**	**2**		**44**
Date	**Information/Other Activities**	**Student**	**Admin**	**Reg Teach**	**SpEd Teach**	**Para Pro**	**Rel Ser**	**Comm Pers**	**High Educ**	**Parent**	**Other**
10-31	Tri-State ICC							14			
11-8	Project Director Meeting - DC		20	6	75		10		25	10	7
11-14	Sp.Ed. Conf.			5	3		1		1	4	4
12-1	3-Rivers ICC							23			
1-3	DD Planning Council										14
1-18	Family Support Roundtable							14			
3-14	Yamni ICC							7			
3-15	Family Support Roundtable							13			
3-17	Partners/Policy Making										30
4-6	3-Rivers ICC Annual Conf							32			
4-24	Central Dakota ICC							10			
5-9	Yamni ICC							19			
5-22	Central Dakota ICC							12			
5-22	Conf Call School for Deaf Adv Com										8
6-13	Yamni ICC							4			
6-14	Family Support Roundtable										20
6-15	Dupree ICC							10			
6-20	CAASP-Aberdeen ICC							22			
6-28	Mid-Central ICC							20			
	Totals		**20**	**11**	**78**		**11**	**200**	**26**	**14**	**83**
	Page Total	**17**	**23**	**58**	**85**	**1**	**19**	**201**	**28**	**14**	**127**